

Orange and Union Streets Neighborhood Study
Matthew Beard House
also known as Sally Beard Gardner House
18 Orange Street
Nantucket
Nantucket County
Massachusetts

HABS No. MASS-1068

HABS
MASS
10-NANT
76N-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

ORANGE AND UNION STREETS NEIGHBORHOOD STUDY
MATTHEW BEARD HOUSE
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Location: 18 Orange Street (on east side), Nantucket,
Massachusetts

Present Owner: Edgar V. Seeler

Present Occupant: Edgar V. Seeler

Present Use: Seasonal occupancy

Brief Statement
of Significance: Pre-Revolutionary War house built in the section
known as Quaaty Bank; part of the Orange and Union
Streets Neighborhood Study (MASS-1014).

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners:

- c. 1770 -- This was the homestead of Matthew Beard who
was born in 1746 and married in 1771. Records
are too incomplete to determine a definite date
when house was built, or by whom.
- 1785 -- Matthew Beard died. After a Deed of Division in
the Fourth Fish Lot Shares between the heirs of
Matthew Beard, his daughter Sally Beard owned
this property. She apparently lived here all
of her life. She married Joseph Gardner in 1796,
when the property became known as the Sally Beard
Gardner Homestead.
- 1875 -- (August 6) Eunice N. Jenkins inherited from her
mother, Sally Beard Gardner.
- 1875 -- (Sept. 19) Charles C. Hillman inherited under will
of Eunice N. Jenkins, who died one month after in-
heriting the property. Her will reads in part:
"I give and bequeath to my cousin Charles Hillman ...
and all the interest that I may die possessed of
in the house and land on Orange Street formerly
occupied by my mother Sally Gardner". (Note:
Eunice N. Jenkins' own home was on Union Street).
- 1877 -- Andrew D. and Amelia R. Winslow bought for \$605.
at public auction from Henry Lyon, guardian of
Charles C. Hillman, "being the same known as the
Sally Gardner Estate".

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HABS No. MASS-1068 (Page 2)

1893 -- Mary E. Dudley bought from the Winslows.

1906 -- Leila I. Laughlin bought from Mary E. Dudley.

1939 to date -- Edgar V. Seeler by deed from Leila Laughlin Carlisle.

(Abstract: Records at Registry Deeds, Nantucket, Massachusetts.)

2. Date of erection: c. 1770. Early records are too vague to establish how much earlier than this the house may have been built.
3. Architect: Unknown.
4. Original plans, construction, etc.: Originally this was a simple, central chimney dwelling with a small ell at rear.
5. Notes on alterations and additions: House has been quite extensively added to at the back, with changes made in good taste for comfortable modern living.

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

John Beard, father of Matthew Beard, came to Nantucket from Teignmouth, England. His descendants owned property on Quaaty Hill up to 1874. The Beards and their Myrick neighbors on the north were related by marriage.

Sally Beard, daughter of Matthew Beard, grew up in this house and lived there after her marriage to Joseph Gardner and until she died in August, 1875 at the age of ninety-seven.

Charles Jenkins came to Nantucket from Barnstable on Cape Cod and married Sally Beard Gardner's daughter Eunice. They had no children and Eunice left the property to her cousin Charles C. Hillman, who was the son of Sally Beard's sister Elizabeth.

Therefore, the house remained in the Beard family for well over a hundred years.

The town bearing the name of Sherborn, which was changed in 1795 to Nantucket, was moved c. 1715 - 1720 from the section around Capaum Pond to the present location and for a while was known as Wesco. Wesco was laid out by the Proprietors into five squadrons, each of them 8 rods wide and 80 rods in length with convenient streets and highways; each squadron contained four lots, being 2 rods wide each. The elevation on Orange Street was in the part known as the Fish Lot Shares and this house was in the 4th Fish Lot Share.

The east side of Orange Street in this section was known as Quaaty Bank or Hill, an Indian name for a bluff or long hill, while the

west side of Orange Street was called Wesco Hill.

Orange Street was opened in 1726 but the streets were not named until 1797. It was first paved with cobblestones which are said to still be in place under the asphalt.

The old houses on Orange Street for some unknown reason were removed more generally than from any other street in the town. The house of Colonel Brayton on the north of 18 Orange Street was built in 1769 by Abishai Bunker and left by will of Abishai Bunker, 2nd, "an Elder in the Friends Society" to the Nantucket Monthly Meeting. It was eventually sold and later taken down, making an attractive garden area with an interesting fence along the street. However, several Pre-Revolutionary War structures are still standing between Stone Alley and the top of Quaaty Hill.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old Views: Photograph of Orange Street showing original cobblestones in Nantucket Illustrated by A. Wittemann, New York: Albertype Co., 1885; drawing of this section of Orange Street in Nantucket Sketchbook by Edwin Eberman, Nantucket: S. F. Baker, 1946; plan of land of Mrs. Mary E. Dudley (18 Orange Street) surveyed by William F. Codd, 1893, Book 77, Page 55, Registry Deeds, Nantucket, Massachusetts; Land Court Plan No. 11438B, filed with Certificate of Title No. 1596, Land Court Plans, Registry Deeds, Nantucket, Mass.

Prepared by Mrs. Marie M. Coffin
Nantucket, Massachusetts
July 1970

PART II. PROJECT INFORMATION

These records were prepared as part of the Orange and Union Streets Neighborhood Study (MASS-1014) made in the summer of 1970 by the Historic American Buildings Survey on Nantucket, Massachusetts. This is the fifth summer project of a continuing HABS comprehensive survey of the early architecture and urban design of Nantucket financed by a grant from the Nantucket Historical Trust.

The project was under the general supervision of James C. Massey, Chief of the Historic American Buildings Survey. Project Director was Professor F. Blair Reeves, A.I.A., of the University of Florida. Historical information was provided by Mrs. Marie M. Coffin of Nantucket, Massachusetts. Photographs are by Jack E. Boucher of Linwood, New Jersey. The material was edited for deposit in the Library of Congress by Mrs. Constance Werner Ramirez, August 1971.